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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-15. (Withdrawn)

Claims 16 & 17 (Canceled).

Claims 18-28. (Withdrawn)

Claims 29 & 30. (Canceled).

31. (Currently Amended) A screening method for a prophylactic/therapeutic substance for a disease involved in differentiation of skeletal muscle cell and/or metabolic abnormality, which comprises bringing a protein comprising an amino acid sequence having an identity of 80% or more to the amino acid sequence starting at Amino Acid No. 1 in the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or 4, or a salt thereof, into contact with its receptor in the presence or absence of a test substance, and selecting the test substance that changes the ability of said protein or salt thereof to bind to said receptor as a candidate for a prophylactic/therapeutic substance for a disease involved in differentiation of skeletal muscle cell and/or metabolic abnormality using the protein of claim 1 or the partial peptide of claim 3 or a salt thereof.

32. (Original) The screening method of claim 31, wherein the metabolic abnormality is a sugar/lipid metabolic abnormality.

Claims 33-38. (Withdrawn)

Claims 39 & 40 (Canceled).

Claims 41 & 42. (Withdrawn)

Claims 43 & 44. (Canceled).

Claims 45-51. (Withdrawn)

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52.(New) The screening method of claim 31, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence having an identity of 90% or more to the amino acid sequence starting at Amino Acid No. 1 in the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or 4.

53.(New) The screening method of claim 31, wherein the protein comprises the amino acid sequence starting at Amino Acid No. 1 in the amino acid sequence shown by SEQ ID NO:2 or 4.

54.(New) The screening method of claim 31, wherein the disease is obesity, diabetes mellitus, impaired glucose tolerance, arteriosclerosis, hypertension or hyperlipidemia.